

Options for ungulate management in amended 10j rule

(v) *Take in response to wild ungulate impacts.* If wolf predation is having an unacceptable impact on wild ungulate populations (deer, elk, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, antelope, or bison) as determined by the respective State or Tribe, a State or Tribe may lethally remove the wolves in question.

(A) In order for this provision to apply, the State or Tribes must prepare a science-based document that:

(1) Describes the basis of ungulate population or herd management objectives, what data indicate that the ungulate population or herd is below management objectives, what data indicate that wolves are a major cause of the unacceptable impact to the ungulate population or herd, why wolf removal is a warranted solution to help restore the ungulate population or herd to State or Tribal management objectives, the level and duration of wolf removal being proposed, and how ungulate population or herd response to wolf removal will be measured and control actions adjusted for effectiveness;

(2) Demonstrates that attempts were and are being made to address other identified major causes of ungulate herd or population declines or the State or Tribe commits to implement possible remedies or conservation measures in addition to wolf removal; and

(3) Provides an opportunity for peer review and public comment on their proposal prior to submitting it to the Service for written concurrence. The State or Tribe must:

(i) Conduct the peer review process in conformance with the Office of Management and Budget's Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review (70 FR 2664, January 14, 2005) and include in their proposal an explanation of how the bulletin's standards were considered and satisfied; and

(ii) Obtain at least five independent peer reviews from individuals with relevant expertise other than staff employed by a State, Tribal, or Federal agency directly or indirectly involved with predator control or ungulate management in Idaho, Montana, or Wyoming.

(B) Before we authorize lethal removal, we must determine that an unacceptable impact to wild ungulate populations or herds has occurred. We also must determine that the proposed lethal removal is science-based, will not contribute to reducing the wolf population in the State below 20 breeding pairs and 200 wolves, and will not impede wolf recovery.